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# Weekly Summary

## Special Report

*Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe:  
The Crunch*

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## Summary

After six months of preparatory discussions and a brief opening stage last July, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe gets down to brass tacks on 18 September in Geneva. This stage of the conference is to produce the agreements that are to be approved by ministers—or at the summit level—in the final stage. The conference has moved forward thus far by postponing or skirting contentious issues.

Vigorous East-West clashes are likely to precede any agreements of importance; the East wants assurances about the "inviolability of frontiers"; the West would like to see "freer movement" of people and ideas across national boundaries. The willingness of the Soviets to make concessions on "freer movement" and of the West to sweeten the bargain with offers, for instance, of increased economic cooperation, will say a great deal about the direction of detente in the 1970s. The conference could produce only pious rubbish or it could take a small but meaningful step toward reduced tensions and more stable relations between East and West.

## Background

The idea of a security conference in Europe was first broached by the Soviets in 1954, at the height of the cold war. Behind the initiative was a Soviet desire to secure international approval of European borders as they stood after World War II and thus give Soviet territorial gains legitimacy; equally important, the conference would ratify the division of Germany. The Soviets had in mind a grandiose diplomatic gathering, something like the Congress of Vienna, that would define the structure of European security for decades to come.

This rather grand design was in the beginning staunchly opposed by the West. By last year, however, a number of factors—including Brandt's Ostpolitik and the Berlin and inter-German agreements—had made the idea of a conference more acceptable. Although the basic Soviet aim was the same, the West Europeans recognized that a certain legitimacy had already been given to the division of Germany in the other agreements.

They also began to think that a conference might offer real opportunities for the West. It could perhaps encourage the countries of Eastern

Europe to move toward a greater degree of independence in their relations with the Soviet Union. In addition, the Communist regimes might be induced to relax their domestic policies which would lead to greater freedom for the people of Eastern Europe. Some economic benefits might also be derived from the conference. To the smaller nations of Western Europe, a conference began to seem a way of participating in detente. Of their larger neighbors, Bonn now viewed the conference as a logical extension of its Ostpolitik, while France saw it as an opportunity for exercising independent diplomacy. The EC as a whole perceived in a conference a chance to concert its policies toward the East.

## Preparatory Talks, November-June

Preparations for a conference got under way in Helsinki in late November 1972 and, with interruptions between the four preparatory rounds, lasted until early June 1973. Despite debate that at times plumbed the depths of obscurity, there were several useful results. First, possible agenda topics were grouped into four "baskets," or general categories. Agreement was made possible when the Soviets reluctantly acceded to the West's desire to put "freer

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movement" items into a separate basket. With the agenda items organized in their "baskets," the delegates decided to produce draft "mandates" for each of the "baskets" to serve as terms of reference for the committees in the stage of the conference that is about to begin. These "mandates" were haggled over for months, and the Soviet willingness to discuss substantive issues at such length in the preparatory talks was another major concession. Moscow had hoped the preparations would be general and brief; they ended up being detailed and lengthy.

The Soviet concessions, however, were for the most part a matter of tactics. The main Soviet goal in the preparatory stage was, of course, the convening of the conference itself. A willingness to give in on procedural points and even to display some flexibility on matters of substance seemed to Moscow a cheap enough price to pay for the conference. The Soviets doubtless hope to turn these concessions to their later advantage. They may, for example, argue that, since the preparations reached such a level of detail and went on for so long before, the second stage of the conference need not go over the same tired arguments and can be relatively brief.

Finally, the Soviets may have been pushed a bit by the surprising unity of the non-bloc countries. This was due in part to the consultations in Helsinki among members of the EC. The preparatory phases were perhaps the first major success of the EC at political consultation. Even the French—expected to be the Western prima donna—played a useful role. The emergence of reasonable EC positions on a number of issues attracted support from other Western countries and from several nonaligned states as well.

#### STAGE I, JULY

The preparatory talks ended in a spirit of optimism, with many observers feeling that agreement on the "mandates" might indicate that the resolution of some problems would be easier than had previously been thought. The conference itself was formally held in Helsinki on 3 to 7 July; this stage showed clearly that no one was really willing to concede basic positions without a good deal of intensive bargaining.

Foreign Minister Gromyko made the first speech. He took nearly three times his allotted 20 minutes and left no doubt that the main Soviet goal was, as it had always been, the preservation of the territorial status quo in Europe. Europe's existing borders, he said, are an incontestable political reality. He also opposed the West's aspirations for the freer movement of people and ideas, arguing that there could be no changes in political systems or ideological views. Any increased contacts would have to develop, he insisted, in accordance with the laws, customs, and traditions of the countries involved.

The Polish and East German foreign ministers followed suit. Specifically, they said that since the treaties between West Germany and various East European countries recognized territorial realities, the conference should do so too. The Polish and Bulgarian representatives offered draft guidelines for increased contacts between East and West that would place such contacts firmly under state auspices.



Gromyko arrives for opening session

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**BASKETS AND MANDATES****I. Questions Relating to Security in Europe****A. Principles (in conformity with purposes and principles of UN):**

1. Sovereign equality
2. Non-use of force
3. Inviolability of frontiers
4. Territorial integrity of states
5. Peaceful settlement of disputes
6. Nonintervention in internal affairs
7. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms—freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief
8. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples
9. Cooperation among states
10. Fulfillment of obligations under international law

**B. Elaboration of a method for the peaceful settlement of disputes****C. Confidence-building measures:**

1. Prior notification of major military maneuvers
2. Exchange of observers at maneuvers
3. Prior notification of major military movements (to be studied only)

**II. Cooperation in the Fields of Economics, Science and Technology, and the Environment****A. Commercial exchanges (general provisions to promote trade and exchange of services, "most-favored-nation" treatment, measures to reduce and eliminate obstacles to trade, measures to facilitate commercial transactions and exchange of services)****B. Industrial cooperation and projects****C. Science and technology****D. Environment****E. Other areas (transport and communications, tourism, migrant labor, training of personnel in economic activity)****III. Cooperation in Humanitarian and Other Fields****A. Human contacts (facilitation of freer movement among persons, institutions, and organizations):**

1. Family contacts; international marriages
2. Travel
3. Youth meetings; sports

**B. Information (printed, filmed, and broadcast):**

1. Specific agreements to improve circulation and access
2. Improvement of conditions for foreign journalists

**C. Culture:**

1. Increased cultural contacts and exchanges
2. Encouragement of international cultural events and projects

**D. Education:**

1. Improved access to other countries' institutions
2. Encouragement of study of other languages and civilizations
3. Exchange of information on teaching methods

**IV. Follow-up to the Conference ("such measures as required" to give effect to CSCE decisions; perhaps contributions from existing international organizations)****SECRET**

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The Western foreign ministers spoke out strongly in favor of meaningful agreements to enhance human contacts, making it clear once again that this is the supreme Western goal at the conference. Most of the Western ministers said that in dealing with the "inviolability of frontiers" ways must be found to leave open the possibility for peaceful changes deriving from the popular will.

The final document of the preparatory talks—containing the "mandate" and a section on procedures for the remainder of the conference—was approved early in the July session with little controversy. It was agreed that the conference's coordinating committee should begin work at the end of August and that the second stage itself would get under way on 18 September. The Soviets had wanted a somewhat earlier schedule. The West successfully resisted Soviet pressure to make plans for a third stage, insisting that the progress of the second stage must first be assessed.

The concluding days of the session were taken up with the antics of Malta's Dom Mintoff. He argued loud and long for a scheme that would allow Algeria and Tunisia to present their views to the conference. Some Western countries, West Germany for instance, felt that if these Maghreb states were allowed to speak, other Mediterranean countries, especially Israel, should be invited as well. Although the ministers did not settle the problem, a solution now seems in sight. It has been agreed in principle that Algeria and Tunisia can make written or oral contributions, as may any other Mediterranean state. Israel's application will not be considered until after the second stage opens, however, and the tentative agreement could fall apart at that point. Such an impasse would no doubt set Mintoff off once again. He has warned that if Tunisian and Algerian contributions are not accepted, he will attempt to hold up the conference's progress in other areas.

## STAGE II, 18 SEPTEMBER

### Procedures

The work of the second stage will be conducted by committees that will deal with each of

the "baskets," the initial work being divided among a number of subcommittees. The committees and subcommittees will be overseen by a coordinating committee, which has already met in Geneva. In addition to managing the committees throughout the second stage, the coordinating committee will assemble the committees' production and present it at the final stage of the conference. The coordinating committee will be able to make recommendations to participating governments about the conduct of the conference, and especially about arrangements for the final stage.

The committees and subcommittees will make decisions by "consensus"—meaning in practice that an objection by any participating state can block agreement. It is this procedure that will give Mintoff and perhaps others an opportunity for grandstanding.

### Issues

The two most contentious issues at the second stage will be, as they were at the earlier phases, "inviolability of frontiers" and "freer movement."

On the first, the Soviets, who want the conference to endorse the status quo in Europe, will press for a blunt statement. A recent Soviet draft shows what Moscow has in mind:

*Inviolability of frontiers, in accordance with which the participating states regard the existing frontiers in Europe as inviolable now and in the future, will make no territorial claims upon each other, and acknowledge that peace in the area can be preserved only if no one encroaches upon the present frontiers.*

The Soviets want such a statement to stand by itself, with no explicit or implicit connection to other items, and without any other qualification. This is, of course, the maximum Soviet position, but significant concessions will probably be hard to come by.

Recognizing that some wording about the "inviolability of frontiers" must appear in any declaration of principles by the conference, the allies will nonetheless seek to modify the wording as much as possible. Some may seek language that

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West German Foreign Minister Scheel lunches with East German Foreign Minister Winzer during opening stage

would turn the principle against the Brezhnev doctrine. The West Germans, in particular, feel strongly that any statement on inviolability must not rule out peaceful change. Most of the other West Europeans agree; some of them may hope that progress toward European political integration might lead, decades hence, to peaceful changes in national boundaries. They may try for a statement to the effect that peaceful change is allowable in accordance with the popular will of the states involved, or one linking "inviolability of frontiers" to the "non-use of force," a formulation that would imply that peaceful changes in borders are not excluded.

This damage-limiting exercise on "inviolability of frontiers" is not a major Western aim. What the allies want most out of the conference is a series of specific agreements to facilitate the movement of people and ideas across borders between East and West. They feel that if detente is to have any concrete expression, it must be in this area of greater East-West contacts. The UK has suggested freer circulation of newspapers, common television facilities, and perhaps even an international magazine. West Germany has stressed measures dealing with the reuniting of families and the working conditions of journalists. Others have suggested measures in the field of education. Moscow's recent drive against Soviet

dissidents will have the effect of increasing Western determination in this area.

The Soviets and their allies, of course, want any increased contacts to be state-sponsored. To the extent they can get away with it, they will oppose explicit agreements that do not meet this requirement. They will want it made clear that there must be no tampering with the social or governmental systems of the East European states.

While they will not give way on essential points, the Soviets will be making every effort to appear accommodating on this item. Brezhnev seemed recently to be trying to squeeze increased East-West contacts into an acceptable ideological mold. Whereas previously the Soviets had accepted the idea grudgingly, Brezhnev developed a thesis that the Soviet Union welcomes increased contacts since it is convinced of the correctness of its path and its Marxist-Leninist ideology. This "victory-through-contacts" formulation is far from being a basic change in the Soviet position; it was probably meant to provide a bit more tactical flexibility in the "freer movement" area in the negotiations this fall.

The lines are not so clearly drawn on other issues, and discussion is likely to be considerably more blurred. The participants for example, have to decide what sort of "confidence-building measures" they wish to endorse. These measures, the only real military item at the conference, include the prior notification of military activity and the presence of observers at military maneuvers. Most participants agree on the need for such provisions as long as they apply only to maneuvers. Some allies, particularly Belgium and the Netherlands, wish to apply "confidence-building measures" to major troop movements. The Soviets oppose this, realizing it would reduce their flexibility vis-a-vis Eastern Europe. The US does not wish to press the Soviets to apply these measures to troop movements, fearing that the disagreement might lengthen the conference and prevent real progress in the force reduction talks.

The discussion of "economic and scientific cooperation" is likely to be tough and protracted.

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While it is an area of importance to the Soviet Union and its allies, they may be willing to settle for bland statements of principle in order to move the conference along. Disagreement is likely to arise between the Soviets, who champion the "most-favored-nation" trade doctrine, and the West Europeans, who favor reciprocal advantages and obligations. The members of the EC will be pressing hard for specific agreements on the topics mentioned in the economic cooperation "mandate"—steps to reduce and eliminate obstacles to trade, measures to facilitate commercial transactions and the exchange of services, and projects in industrial cooperation. A West German official said recently that his government would like to see seven to ten concrete agreements emerge under this "mandate." The Danish foreign minister, who was the EC spokesman at the opening stage of the conference, promised substantial EC involvement during discussions of economic cooperation at the second stage. In accordance with this pledge, the EC Commission will be represented at the second stage.

Provisions for following up the conference probably will be adopted, but they are not likely to be spelled out by the end of the second stage. That should satisfy the West, which has been unenthusiastic about the idea all along. The Soviets once regarded the establishment of follow-up machinery as one of their main aims, but they have had little to say about this recently and may not press the issue. They will probably be content with a loose commitment from the participating states to continue a pan-European approach to the security of Europe.

#### Western Unity

The unity of the Western countries will probably hold up during Stage II. Western representatives will coordinate their positions in the NATO and EC caucuses, and there will be a few substantive disagreements, the most likely one over the extent of "confidence-building measures." Some of the smaller Western states will probably press—against the wishes of the US—for a statement in conference documents connecting the conference with the force reduction talks that begin in Vienna in October. The NATO and EC



Stage I opens at Finlandia House in Helsinki

discussions to prepare for the opening of the second stage suggest that there may be other minor disagreements in the Western camp. The Soviet Union can be expected to try to turn any such Western disunity to its advantage.

There may be greater disagreement on tactics than on substance. Most of the West Europeans, while they have become more positive about the conference over the last several months, still fear what it might do to the public mood. The British have warned that a "detente euphoria" coming out of the conference could make it harder and harder to maintain public support for an adequate defense. French Foreign Minister Jobert was making the same point when he said, "Public opinion must know that such a prestigious conference, however eagerly awaited, could, despite the public's ambitions, mislead it by making false assurances."

Accordingly, West Europeans will insist that the conference produce not merely bland declarations but meaningful, concrete agreements on specific subjects. During the preparations for the conference, some of the allies felt that the US was not providing the leadership expected of it. That complaint, likely to be heard again during the second stage, derives from West European concerns that the US may give in too quickly to the Soviets on conference issues in return for Moscow's concessions in the force reduction talks.

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## CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

## NATO

Belgium	Iceland	Portugal
Canada	Italy	Turkey
Denmark	Luxembourg	UK
France	Netherlands	US
Greece	Norway	West Germany

## WARSAW PACT

Bulgaria	Hungary	Romania
Czechoslovakia	Poland	USSR
East Germany		

## NONALIGNED

Austria	Malta	Sweden
Cyprus	Monaco	Switzerland
Finland	San Marino	Vatican
Ireland	Spain	Yugoslavia
Lichtenstein		

How hard to fight for matters of importance to the West and how long the conference should go on may well be of major importance to the West Europeans and could in fact lead to conflicts with the US.

## Eastern Unity

The Soviets will have little trouble keeping most of their East European allies in line. A bloc-wide campaign to close ranks in foreign policy and ideological questions suggests that any significant show of independence by the East Europeans—except Romania and Yugoslavia—is unlikely.

The Romanians appear determined to press the conference to approve points that most feel fall within the purview of the force reduction talks. They argue that military topics must be discussed if the security talks are to produce genuine results. The Romanians thus will persist in seeking to have these views recognized, even to the extent of delaying over-all progress on the talks.

The chief of Romania's delegation to the conference recently told a group of NATO chiefs of mission in Bucharest that his country will present two documents at Geneva—one on the non-use of force, the other on a permanent European security organization. He stressed that the first will be advanced with "great vigor," and it will call for prior notification of large-scale military movements and for regional disarmament measures in Central Europe. Bucharest, he noted, has problems with the Soviet concept of the "inviolability of frontiers."

Yugoslavia will also pose problems for the Soviets. Belgrade is not a member of the Soviet alliance system but, like Bucharest, it sees the conference as a useful forum in its fight against Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.

## Outlook

Stage II will be difficult. Many of the East-West disagreements that have been glossed over so far will have to be faced squarely. Problems will be created by the very size of the negotiating exercise; 35 participating states operating in numerous committees and subcommittees create almost endless possibilities for delay and confusion. It is all but certain that the West European allies will not allow the second stage to conclude by the end of this year, as the Soviets desire. It is also a good bet that the committees will become involved in more detail than Moscow would like.

Should the second stage conclude, however, with agreement on a number of principles, the Soviets will have gotten some of what they wanted. If a small number of specific agreements emerge in the area of freer movement, the West will be at least partially satisfied. If all goes well, the West might oblige the Soviets and hold the conference's final stage—the one that will consecrate the results—at the summit.

In both the short and long term, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

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cannot be separated from other elements of East-West diplomacy. As long as the security conference is going on, little progress is likely in the force reduction talks in Vienna. Should the security conference fail—or be marked by extreme contention—the force reduction talks would encounter additional difficulties in dealing with the

tough issues they face. Too much should not be expected of the security conference. In a volume dealing with East-West relations, the conference would be only a preface; most of the substantive chapters would be taken up with the force reduction talks and future US-Soviet bilateral dealings.

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